

REPORT

OF THE

SECRETARY OF WAR,

IN RELATION TO

A Military Road,

FROM

ST. PHILIP TO THE ENGLISH TURN.

Made in pursuance of a resolution of the Senate.

JANUARY 13, 1824.

Read, and referred to the Committee on Military Affairs.

WASHINGTON :

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1824.

DEPARTMENT OF WAR,*January 10th, 1824.*

SIR: In pursuance of the resolution of the honorable Senate of the United States, of the 17th of January, 1821, referring to me, to be considered and reported upon, "the memorial of the General Assembly of the state of Louisiana, in relation to a Military Road from fort St. Philip to the English turn," I have the honor to present, herewith, a report of the chief Engineer, dated the 9th instant, which fulfils the object contemplated by the resolution.

Respectfully submitted,

J. C. CALHOUN.

The Hon. JOHN GAILLARD,

President of the Senate, pro tem.

DEPARTMENT OF WAR

January 10th, 1891.

Sir: In pursuance of the resolution of the honorable Senate of the United States of the 17th of January, 1891, relating to me, to be considered and reported upon, the memorial of the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana, in relation to a Military Medal from Fort St. Philip to the "Englishman", I have the honor to present herewith a report of the Chief Engineer, dated the 5th instant, which I think will be most satisfactorily substantiated by the resolution.

Respectfully submitted,

J. G. CALHOUN.

The Hon. John C. Calhoun,
President of the Senate, etc. etc.

ENGINEER DEPARTMENT,

January 9th, 1824.

SIR: Lieutenant Chase, of the corps of Engineers, has recently examined the banks of the river Mississippi, from New Orleans to Plaquemine Turn, with a view to the selection of a route for a road between those places. The right bank of the river affording a shorter route, and a soil more favorable for construction, has been preferred, and a sketch of the direction of the route selected, together with an estimate in detail, of the cost of completing the road, adapted to the different circumstances under which it may be effected, have been received.

I have the honor to present herewith, a copy of the sketch, and the substance of the estimate abovementioned. It will be perceived by the former, that the road is divided into three sections. The first section extending from New Orleans, to the point marked A, at the plantation of Mr. Johnston; a distance of 45 miles is now provided with a road, practicable for light carriages, but not for heavy carriages or artillery. The same road extends through the second section, from A to B, a distance of five miles, but is not practicable for carriages of any kind. There is no road whatever in the third section extending from B to Plaquemine Turn, a distance of twenty miles. The route selected, will embrace the road passing through the 1st and 2d sections as just described, which it is proposed to enlarge and improve, so as to render it practicable for heavy carriages and artillery. To effect this, in the first section, will require 10560 days of labor, besides the hire of overseers, and the cost of tools. Supposing the labor to be contributed gratuitously from the plantations contiguous to the road, in consideration of the advantage that will accrue to them from its improvement, the only expense will be, for 495 days hire of overseers, at \$1 50 - - - \$742 50
And for the cost of tools (spades and wheel barrows) 700 00

Making the total cost, exclusive of the expense of labor	\$1,442 50
Should the planters refuse to contribute the labor, it might be hired at 50 cents per day, which would add to the cost	5,280 00

And enhance the total cost to	\$6,722 50
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The expense of the 2d section would be, for 1760 days of labor, which, at 50 cents per day, would amount to	\$880 00
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And for hire of overseers and tools	60 00
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Making the total cost of	940 00
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The expense of the 3d section, would be, for 7744 days
of labor, which, at \$1 per day, would amount to

\$7744 00

And for hire of overseers and tools - 700 00

Making the total cost - - - \$8,444 00

And the aggregate cost of the three sections - \$16,106 50

But, should it be thought that the road passing through
the 1st section, would answer in its present state, the
deduction of the amount estimated for its improve-
ment - - - \$6,722 50

Would diminish the aggregate cost to - - \$9,384 00

The foregoing is furnished in pursuance of your instructions, pre-
dicated upon a resolution of the Senate, dated the 17th of January,
1821. Early measures were taken to obtain the information requir-
ed, for the fulfilment of those instructions, but, owing to unavoidable
circumstances, it has been delayed until this time.

Respectfully submitted,

ALEXANDER MACOMB,

Maj. Gen. Chief Engineers.

The Hon. J. C. CALHOUN,
Secretary of War.

*To the Congress of the United States, in Senate and House of Repre-
sentatives convened.*

The Memorial of the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana,

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH:

That Fort St. Phillippe, situate on the Eastern bank of the river
Mississippi, about sixty miles below the city of New Orleans, is a
post of the utmost importance to the defence of this state, being the
only fortress to oppose the approach of an enemy, to the city
on that direction. That although during the late invasion, the skill
of the officers, and valor of the men forming its garrison, baffled the
attempt of the enemy in that quarter, yet the safety of that place
was more than once endangered by the extreme difficulty of commu-
nicating with it, during the time of the siege. This difficulty arises,
from the nature of the ground between the Fort and the English
Turn. It consists of a strip of land along each bank of the river,
in some places extremely narrow, and in all subject to inundations
during the rise of the river, when not protected by an embankment.
These embankments are made by individuals, who own the lands

where they have been granted, but are neither permanent, nor extensive enough, to rely upon, when so great a stake as that of the public safety is at issue; a great proportion too, of the lands being still public property, no embankment whatever is made on them, and wherever they occur, the communication is completely cut off.

The event of an enemy possessing himself of the one bank of the river, which happened during the late war, and may again occur, renders it necessary that the communication should be provided for on both sides of the river.

Your memorialists therefore think it a measure of high importance to the defence of the state, that provision should be made for making a military road, from fort St. Philip to the English Turn, on both sides of the river. And they have the satisfaction to assure the Government of the United States, that, in their opinion, the expense of executing this necessary work, will, in a great measure, be defrayed by the increased value of the lands belonging to the public, which lie on the course of the projected road.

Your memorialists therefore pray, that measures may be taken (either by the labor of the troops, or in such other way as may be deemed proper) to construct a road on both sides of the river, from fort St. Philip to the English Turn.

A. BEAUVAIS,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

J. POYDRAS,

President of the Senate.

This is to certify, that the foregoing is a true copy of the original, deposited in the office of the Secretary of State. Given under my hand, and the seal of the State, this 13th day of December, 1820, and of the Independence of the United States, the 45th year.

J. VILLERE.

By the Governor,

H. LAVERGNE,

Secretary of State.

